US Army Corps of Engineers
St. Louis District®

Media Advisory

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Rivers May Approach or Exceed Flood Stages in St. Louis Area

The St. Louis region has been subjected to rising water levels in major rivers as well as their tributaries this week, and flood stages may be approached or exceeded in some locations during the Memorial Day weekend. This is due to widespread, heavy rainfall throughout much of the Mississippi and Missouri River valleys during the past two weeks. As a result of the recent rains, grounds are already saturated and will not readily absorb further heavy precipitation.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District is maintaining close, frequent contact with the National Weather Service, the U.S. Coast Guard, the RIAC (River Industry Action Council) and local governments and levee commissions during this period of predicted possible high water.

We anticipate the Mississippi River nearing or reaching flood stage in St. Louis toward the end of the Memorial Day Weekend. Flood stage is defined as the point at which the river is out of its banks and does not necessarily imply that there is going to be widespread flood damage. Various levels of floodwalls and levees well-protect most urban areas and many rural agricultural areas.

The Mississippi River has already reached flood stages at Locks 24 and 25 at Clarksville and Winfield, Mo., respectively.

The Missouri River appears already to be cresting in the St. Louis area, and hopefully, falling water levels on the Missouri this weekend should contribute to improving conditions downstream from the confluence with the Mississippi.

Predicted river stages are based on predicted rainfalls, including how much rain is predicted, where and for what duration. These kinds of projections are subject to change as the precipitation can be better predicted.

These predictions are not connected in any way with potential localized flash flooding. Persons who live in areas prone to this kind of flooding should remain what we term "situationally aware," paying especially careful attention when storms approach. We recommend that people in low-lying areas stay tuned to local broadcast media in such situations. Further, we recommend that they plan to protect both property and lives if heavy local rainfall begins to place either in jeopardy.

In addition, motorists should exercise extreme caution during such periods, as water can rise quickly and be deeper than expected on roads. They should not drive into water, especially in areas with which they are unfamiliar. If they do and their car stalls, they should immediately get out and retreat to high ground. Water covering highways and bridges can rise extremely rapidly.

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2-2-2-2 High Water on Rivers

Interested persons are invited to check the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers web site: www.mvs.usace.army.mil, going to the water control link, and further checking the links to River and Reservoir Reports, as well as River Gage Data, Current Conditions.

The St. Louis District will maintain a heightened watch during this period of expected high water, including during the upcoming holiday weekend, and will issue updated reports as necessary.

We emphasize that flooding is not unusual at this time of the year and is indeed, to be expected periodically. To place this in perspective, the 150-year average river stage at St. Louis for June 1 is 18 feet. Flood stage at St. Louis is 30 feet. The all-time record occurred during the flood of 1993 when the river reached 49.6 feet, but was still held in check by the St. Louis floodwall.

Persons planning to visit Corps recreation areas this weekend should consider calling ahead to check latest information of camping and boating conditions as well.

Media updates may be issued if conditions change substantially. Media may contact the St. Louis District Spokesman, Alan Dooley, at:

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Phone numbers for St. Louis District Recreation Sites:

Illinois:

Lake Shelbyville	217-774-3867
Carlyle Lake	618-594-2484
Rend Lake	618-724-2493

Missouri:

Mark Twain Lake	573-735-4097
Wappapello Lake	573-222-8562